

Service Area Plan

Department of Health

Vital Records (40402)

Service Area Background Information

Service Area Description

This service area is responsible for the registration, collection, preservation, amendment and certification of vital records. The vital records system consists of births, deaths, spontaneous fetal deaths, induced termination of pregnancy, marriages, divorces or annulments, adoptions and amendments (alteration to a vital record). This service area is administered by the VDH Division of Vital Records.

Service Area Alignment to Mission

This service area directly aligns with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) mission in promoting and protecting the health of Virginians by serving as the official custodian of all vital records in Virginia. The statistical data collected on these vital records are used by the Virginia Center for Health Statistics to generate annual reports and special reports that address health-related issues.

Service Area Statutory Authority

Chapter 7 (§32.1-249 et seq.) establishes the administration of the system of vital records. This chapter includes the duties of the State Registrar, filing birth, death, spontaneous fetal death, induced termination of pregnancy, marriage and divorce certificates, amending vital records, issuing certified copies of a vital record and automating the vital records system.

Service Area Customer Base

Customer(s)	Served	Potential
Governmental Agencies – Local, State and Federal (request for vital records)	45,399	47,668
Individual Requests for Vital Records	367,864	386,068
Researchers (requests for vital records)	19,465	20,438

Anticipated Changes In Service Area Customer Base

Individual Requests

- With the passing of legislation in the 2005 General Assembly grandparents are now able to request a copy of a grandchild's birth certificate.
- The number of requests will increase based on the changes to local, state and federal laws and policies. Before an individual can obtain any type of service from a governmental agency they must produce a certified copy of a vital record. Vital records are used extensively for employment purposes, travel, and obtaining benefits and to obtain other documents used for identification such as driver licenses, social security, and passports.
- The number of requests will increase based on the studies from the various hospitals, universities and other entities.

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Service Area Products and Services

- Supplies and Forms
 - The State Registrar prepares prints and supplies all blank paper and forms that are used in registering, recording and preserving vital records. These forms are sent to hospitals, courts, funeral homes, local health departments, medical examiner offices, attorneys and any individual filing a vital record. The Electronic Birth Certificate (EBC) is an application used by the 69 birthing facilities that file birth certificates.
- Certified Copies of Vital Records
 - To preserve the original documents, the State Registrar will issue a certified copy of a vital record (birth, marriage, divorce, death or stillbirth) when the applicant has submitted a written request, identification and payment. There are three methods in which an applicant can request a vital record (i) mail, (ii) in person or (iii) Vital Chek express service.
- Amending Vital Records
 - Upon receipt of a certified copy of a court order changing the name, sworn acknowledgment of paternity, court determination of paternity order, adoption report, surrogate consent form, correction affidavit and change of sex document a new birth certificate will be established or the existing vital record is amended.
- Delayed Birth Registration
 - When the birth of a person has not been registered, a delayed birth certificate may be prepared and filed. Documentary evidence that establishes the registrant's name, date of birth, and place of birth and parents names is required before the certificate can be filed.
- Call Center
 - The Call Center provides assistance to customers seeking information on how to obtain a vital record, hours of operation, cost of a vital record, directions to the office, status of their request, and what type of identification they must submit.
- Help Desk Services (IT)
 - IT provides technical support for DVR staff and Hospital Birth Registrars. This support may include setting up new users, troubleshooting computer problems, granting access to Oracle applications and training.
- DVR Web Site
 - This web site contains information on how to apply for a vital record, list of acceptable identification, hours of operation, a question and answer page, Regulations Governing Vital Records, genealogy information, foreign authentication, link to the Virginia Center for Health Statistics and vital records offices in other states. It also contains the application for a vital record that can be downloaded.

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Factors Impacting Service Area Products and Services

The Federal Intelligence Reform Act will increase the number of requests for a vital record. At the end of 2007 or early 2008, this statute will prohibit Federal Government agencies (i.e. SSA, Passport) from accepting birth certificates that are not issued on security paper that contain certain security features. Because of this legislation, individuals will be unable to use previous issued birth certificates to obtain service from a U.S. Government agency.

Anticipated Changes To Service Area Products and Services

- Security Paper. – The Federal Intelligence Reform Bill requires Vital Records Offices to meet certain security features in the security paper used to issue vital records. Failure to comply with these changes will result in the rejection of the vital record at federal agencies.
- Deploy the WEB_EBC (Electronic Birth Certificate) application. This web application will replace the current application used by the hospitals that record and report births to Vital Records.
- Expand the web site to include items such as the Report of Adoption, Acknowledgment of Paternity and Correction Affidavit forms, information on how to file a delayed birth registration and more answers to the most frequently asked questions.
- Develop an on-line tutorial for physicians that will assist them in completing the medical certification on the death certificate.
- Develop an on-line tutorial for the local health department deputy registrars that will assist them in filing home births, reviewing and accepting death certificates, preparing acknowledgment of paternity forms and correction affidavits.
- Develop an on-line tutorial for funeral directors that will assist them in the filing of a death certificate.

Service Area Financial Summary

VDH is authorized by § 32.1-274 of the Code of Virginia to charge a fee for a certified copy of vital records or for a search of the files or records when no copy is made. Fees collected under this section provide 100% of the service area's budget.

	<u>Fiscal Year 2007</u>		<u>Fiscal Year 2008</u>	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$0	\$4,600,914	\$0	\$4,600,914
Changes To Base	\$0	\$1,479,212	\$0	\$1,924,212
SERVICE AREA TOTAL	\$0	\$6,080,126	\$0	\$6,525,126

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Service Area Objectives, Measures, and Strategies

Objective 40402.01

Decrease time required to respond to a citizen's request for a vital record.

Vital Records are a person's first and last identity document. For instance, an individual needs a birth certificate to obtain a social security card, enroll in school, and obtain a driver's license, passport and employment. Governmental agencies use vital records to help establish eligibility for provision of benefits (i.e. social security) and issuance of documents (i.e. -driver licenses and passports).

This Objective Supports the Following Agency Goals:

- Collect, maintain and disseminate accurate, timely, and understandable public health information.
(This objective also aligns with the long-term objective of Virginia to "Engage and inform citizens to ensure that we serve their interests.")

This Objective Has The Following Measure(s):

- **Measure 40402.01.00**

Number of business days required to respond to mailed in requests for a vital record that requires no amendments to the vital record.

Measure Type: Outcome

Measure Frequency: Annually

Measure Baseline: Four days in May 2006.

Measure Target: Three days by July 2007.

Measure Source and Calculation:

Each request for a vital record is entered into a Correspondence Tacking System (CTS). The data collected from the request consists of the requestor name, identification and address, the registrant name, type of vital record needed, and payment. CTS also allows the collection of the date the request was received and the date the vital record was mailed. A status report is generated to capture all of this information.

Objective 40402.01 Has the Following Strategies:

- Screen all requests for acceptability.
- Verify the accuracy of the data that is keyed into CTS.
- Send appropriate letters to customer that lacks the necessary documents to receive a vital record.